



Legal education, research, advice, and advocacy for just and resilient economies.

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March 23, 2018

TO: Honorable Mike McGuire
Chair, Senate Governance and Finance Committee
California State Capitol, Room 408
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: 916-322-0298
Sent via Fax & Email

Re: SB 946 (Lara) -- Support

Dear Chair McGuire and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Sustainable Economies Law Center, I wish to express our strong support for SB 946 (Lara) to protect workers and immigrant communities and to enhance economic opportunity in California.

The Sustainable Economies Law Center cultivates a new legal landscape that supports community resilience and grassroots economic empowerment. We provide essential legal tools so communities everywhere can develop their own sustainable sources of food, housing, energy, jobs, and other vital aspects of a thriving community. We frequently advise food producers and other entrepreneurs with limited access to capital and other resources to develop a business. Rising real estate costs in California make accessing commercial real estate especially difficult for many entrepreneurs we support. Lack of opportunities for accessing capital and other resources in regions with high costs of living cause many people to work as sidewalk vendors, including many immigrants excluded from formal employment opportunities.

Unfortunately, sidewalk vending is criminalized in cities and counties across California. Some jurisdictions impose an outright prohibition on sidewalk vending, while others impose onerous restrictions that severely limit vending and force workers into the informal economy. The criminalization of sidewalk vending has significant and devastating consequences, especially in immigrant communities. We are saddened by routine reports about sidewalk vendors being fined, having their property confiscated, being jailed, and, in some cases involving undocumented immigrants, facing deportation proceedings just for selling food or merchandise on the sidewalk. Local ordinances that prohibit or restrict sidewalk vending can have harmful unintended consequences that are extreme, especially for undocumented immigrants.

Therefore, we wish to express our support for SB 946, a bill to decriminalize sidewalk vending. Thank you for your consideration of these comments. We urge you to support SB 946.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christina Oatfield".

Christina Oatfield, Policy Director